

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.
Affiliate Chapter Relations Committee

Affiliate Chapter Handbook
Third Edition
Section 14

Does Your Entire Membership Look the Same?
How to Recruit and Retain a Diverse Membership

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Does Your Entire Membership Look the Same?
How to Recruit and Retain a Diverse Membership

Cultural Diversity in Leadership Committee

Recruitment is the life-blood of the association. Membership is the source of finance and a variety of talents that support the activities and programs of the association. Every staff person and member must make recruitment his or her business. As individuals are recruiting, it is important to keep in mind the benefits of reaching out to diverse communities and cultures. A diverse membership strengthens the affiliate chapter as well as the individual members. As we learn from each other we grow from our newfound knowledge.

Affiliate chapters can increase their diverse membership through a variety of approaches. Here are just a few:

1. Exchanging organizational membership lists with the local chapters of diversity related organizations (Deaf and interpreting related) and/or local community organizations.

Examples (See the RID website for links and ideas for other diversity related organizations):

- National Alliance of Black Interpreters (NAOBI)
- National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA)
- National Asian Deaf Caucus (NADC)
- Interpreters and Transliterators of Color (ITOC)
- Church/religious organizations

2. Contact RID Membership Services to obtain a list of minority RID members in your area. Affiliate chapters can get as many current member lists as they need and can order, free of charge, one set of membership mailing labels for their state per quarter.
3. Make sure local membership benefits for joining the affiliate chapter are printed and/or shared with the prospective diverse member.
4. Create an organizational involvement form as a tool to help identify diverse members' interests and to capitalize on their skills.
5. Host an annual membership drive with incentives (prizes, drawings, recruit a diverse member—get a membership discount, etc.).
6. Co-host an event or workshop with a local diversity related group/organization.

7. Use current diverse members to go to the local interpreter training programs, high school ASL classes, and other diversity related organizations to talk about your organization.

To **retain** diversity within the affiliate chapter, a conscious effort must be made to meet the needs of those members. Tools to assist in retention are limitless. Some approaches an affiliate chapter may wish to consider are:

1. Establish a local special interest group or caucus.
2. Host a pre-conference event for Interpreters and Transliterators of Color.
3. Host a pre-conference event for all new members.
4. Establish a buddy system to match new diverse members with more experienced members to help the new member feel comfortable (i.e. attend meetings, annual conference or events together).
5. Affiliate chapter newsletters may be used for:
 - o Featuring a diverse member or new member;
 - o Sharing personal testimonies/comments from other diverse members;
 - o Having a column related to issues affecting people of color and/or diversity related topics.
6. Provide training and seminars.
 - o Solicit diverse members (established or new) as presenters.
 - o Have diverse members get involved with the planning and provision of the training (helping with registration).
7. Obtain a Speakers Bureau's listing of diverse speakers, interpreters & trainers.
8. If your affiliate chapter has recruiting materials, make sure that there are pictures of diversity on the brochures and printed materials.
9. Host a multicultural feast/event.

RID is dedicated to serving all interpreters. In an effort to ensure diversity among the membership, the Cultural Diversity in Leadership Committee (CDILC) was established...

"...with the goal of getting RID members of color to assume leadership positions within the association. This is accomplished by the identification of RID members of color; recruitment of RID members of color; training of RID members of color; and by helping to determine a manner to guarantee coherent input to the RID Board of Directors."

Because it is a goal of affiliate chapters to meet the needs of **all** members of the Deaf and hearing communities, and because this community is racially and culturally diverse, it behooves all affiliate chapters to expand their membership and to reach out to **everyone**.

Affiliate chapters may contact CDILC if there are questions regarding diversity. Contact information may be found on the RID website at: www.rid.org/comm.html.